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Outer features in e-dictionaries

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Abstract: Some structures in printed dictionaries also occur in online dictionaries, some do not occur, some need to be adapted whereas new structures may be introduced in online dictionaries. This paper looks at one type of structure, known in printed dictionaries as *outer texts*. It is argued that the notions of a frame structure and front and back matter texts do not apply to online dictionaries. The data distribution in online dictionaries does not only target the dictionary articles. There are components outside the word list section of the dictionary. These components are not always texts. They could e.g. also be video clips. Consequently the notion of outer texts in printed dictionaries is substituted by the notion of outer features in online dictionaries. This paper shows how outer features help to constitute a feature compound. The outer features in eight online dictionaries are discussed. Where the users guidelines text is a compulsory outer text in printed dictionaries it seems that an equivalent feature is often eschewed in online dictionaries. A distinction is made between dictionary-internal and dictionary-external outer features, illustrating that outer features can be situated in other sources than the specific dictionary. More research is needed to formulate models for online features that can play a comprehensive role in online dictionaries.

Keywords: edutainment, feature compound, frame structure, lexicographic functions, lexicotainment, outer features, text compound

1 Introduction

When looking at the prevailing lexicographic theory it is important to notice that this theory has primarily been developed for printed dictionaries. When comparing the lexicographic practice with the theory of lexicography it is well known that practical lexicography developed in a pre-theoretical era, with lexicographic theory being a late-comer to the broader field of lexicography. Theoretical lexicography had to play a catch-up game before reaching a position where it could fulfil the role of suggesting new models for dictionaries that were not mere repetitions of traditional lexicographic products. Unfortunately the emergence and early development of online lexicography followed a pattern not that different from its printed counterpart, i.e. lacking a proper theoretical basis. Too many online dictionaries were prepared with a focus only on the e-environment and the possibilities offered by this technological environment. Too little attention was given to the fact that a good dictionary needs a good theoretical basis. Theoretical lexicographers have failed to be pro-active and to formulate models for online dictionaries in order to ensure a sound theoretical basis. Yet again lexicographic theory has become a follower and not a leader, cf. Gouws (2011:28).

A question that needs to be answered is whether we need a wholly new theory for online lexicography or whether existing theories need to be adapted. A wholly new theory would imply two separate theories for two mediums of dictionary making. Adapting existing theory results in a single theory that can be used for both printed and online dictionaries. This would be a stronger theory – and the option to be pursued in this paper.

For many decades printed dictionaries have included a variety of outer texts, albeit that the selection and presentation of these texts have often been done in quite an arbitrary way and ever so often there has been little coherence between the data on offer in the outer texts and the genuine purpose of a given dictionary. Discussions in theoretical lexicography of the last two decades have given a new focus to outer texts. The notion of a (printed) dictionary as a carrier of text types, cf. Wiegand (1996), and discussions regarding the frame structure of dictionaries, cf. Kammerer & Wiegand (1998) and the data distribution structure in dictionaries, cf. Bergenholtz, Tarp & Wiegand (1999), gave a formal acknowledgement to the status and role of outer texts in dictionaries. Increased research regarding outer texts, cf. e.g. Gouws (2004), Klosa (2009), Bieleńska (2010), has emphasised the significant role that outer texts, especially integrated outer texts, can play in user-directed dictionaries.

When adapting a general theory of lexicography to include online dictionaries within its scope, cognizance should be taken of all the focal areas of the theory in its application to printed dictionaries. As indicated in various publications, cf. Gouws (2005), the development of lexicographic theory for printed dictionaries had different focal points, e.g. a focus on the linguistic contents of dictionaries, a focus on dictionary structures and a focus on the functions of dictionaries. Dictionary structures

remain a vital component of metalexicographic work. The successful adaptation of a general theory of lexicography to become medium-unspecific and therefore to satisfy the demands of the practice of online dictionaries and to be in a position to suggest new ways of planning and compiling online dictionaries compels lexicographers to pay ample attention to the different structures relevant to online dictionaries, cf. in this regard Gouws (2014, 2014a). Some structures of printed dictionaries can be maintained in online dictionaries, some can be deleted, some can be adapted and some new structures may need to be introduced. Concepts relevant to the printed medium, e.g. *frame structure*, *outer text*, *front matter*, *back matter* and the related structures need to be re-investigated to determine whether they are relevant for online dictionaries.

With this paper, we hope to further the discussion about outer features in e-dictionaries by examining outer texts in printed dictionaries, by comparing the data distribution structure in printed and online dictionaries, and by developing the distinction between dictionary-internal versus dictionary-external outer features. Different types of outer features in e-dictionaries (user guidelines, pointers to dictionary content, language games, etc.) in several German and English monolingual general dictionaries are presented to give an overview of the existing practice in e-dictionaries. Finally, the need for outer features is discussed in our theoretical framework.

2 Outer texts in printed dictionaries

A few significant aspects of outer texts in printed dictionaries need to be discussed before moving on to a discussion of the e-environment. Hausmann & Wiegand (1989) already indicated that each and every dictionary needs at least two texts, i.e. the central list and a text, usually given as front matter text, in which user guidelines for the specific dictionary are given. Besides the compulsory text containing the user guidelines there are no rules regarding texts that need to be included as outer texts. Important, however, is the fact that outer texts should not be given as mere cosmetic additions to a dictionary – a form of lexicographic face-lifting, cf. Wiegand and Gouws (2011). Consequently Bergenholtz, Tarp & Wiegand (1999) make a distinction between integrated and non-integrated outer texts, with integrated outer texts contributing to fulfilling the genuine purpose of the given dictionary. Gouws and Steyn (2005) argue in favour of a transtextual application of dictionary functions. This implies that satisfying the functions of a given dictionary should not only be achieved in the central list but also in outer texts. Where outer texts contribute to satisfying the functions of a dictionary these texts are regarded as another type of integrated texts, i.e. integrated into the functions of the given dictionary. In printed dictionaries with their space restrictions outer texts have primarily, albeit not exclusively, been directed at supporting the genuine purpose and genuine functions of the dictionary. In online dictionaries, as will be seen in subsequent sections, the freedom with regard to space can often lead to an inflation in outer features that fall beyond the scope of the genuine

purpose of the dictionary. This demands a new approach to criteria for outer features in online dictionaries.

In printed dictionaries the occurrence of outer texts presupposes a frame structure, cf. Kammerer and Wiegand (1998). According to Kammerer and Wiegand the central list of a dictionary can be extended so that the dictionary includes outer texts. This extension can be either complete or partial. A complete extension results in the central list being complemented by both front and back matter texts, constituting a frame structure, whereas a partial extension results in the central list being complemented by either front or back matter texts, constituting a partial frame, cf. Gouws (2004). A distinction is also made between a primary and secondary frame, cf. Gouws (2001;2004). Outer texts that are functional constituents of a dictionary as a text compound and either frame or partially frame the central list of the dictionary are regarded as constituting a primary frame or primary partial frame. A secondary frame or secondary partial frame is constituted by outer texts resulting from the extension or partial extension of an outer text or of one of the central word lists in a dictionary that displays a series of central lists.

These are a few of the aspects regarding outer texts in printed dictionaries that have been discussed in metalexicographic literature. When looking at the adaptation of a general theory of lexicography to include online dictionaries in its scope the frame structure and its components remain one of the dictionary components that need to be re-investigated.

Before embarking on a discussion of the possible use of outer texts in online dictionaries one needs to look at the motivation for their use in printed dictionaries. With regard to the genuine purpose and the functions of a dictionary it should be investigated whether demands for similar structures in online dictionaries are viable or even possible.

Yet again, the planning and motivation for the data distribution structure in any given dictionary will play an important role in these decisions.

In true online dictionaries, i.e. those e-dictionaries that are not mere digitalized versions of printed dictionaries, the notion of a frame structure has no relevance because the different textual components that fall outside the central word list do not display a linear order or a grouping into front and back matter sections, framing the word list. Therefore the term *frame structure* as well as the terms *front matter* and *back matter* will not be employed in the further discussion in this paper. This already indicates a significant difference between printed and online dictionaries.

3 The data distribution structure

3.1 In printed dictionaries

The compilation of any dictionary, either in printed or online medium, has to be preceded by a clear and unambiguous identification of the data distribution structure, developed specifically for the envisaged dictionary. As a container of knowledge, cf. McArthur (1986), dictionaries contain data that respond to the needs of the intended target users and are presented with regard to their reference skills. In printed dictionaries, lexicographers need to decide on the data needed by their user but also, and this is extremely important, on a venue where specific data should best be presented. Seeing a printed dictionary as a text compound gave lexicographers the opportunity to utilise much more than only the central list as venue for the presentation of lexicographically relevant data. Front and back matter texts were used to accommodate data that help to achieve the genuine purpose of the dictionary. The central list is no longer regarded as the only venue for this kind of data. In making decisions regarding the data distribution the article structure, microstructure as well as the functions of a given dictionary play a significant role.

The article structure of a printed dictionary contains different components, e.g. text segments, comments and search zones. Text segments are structural indicators and items. The former do not convey lexicographic data but items are data-carrying entries within the microstructure of a dictionary article. The selection of data to be included in a dictionary article will result in the use of specific items. Items are grouped together in different comments, e.g. the comment on form and the comment on semantics. According to Wiegand, Beer and Gouws (2013:63) the word list of a printed dictionary forms a search field whereas each dictionary article is seen as a search area and search areas are divided into search zones. In the planning of a dictionary the lexicographer needs to decide on the data that have to be included in the dictionary. A following decision would regard the data types that should be presented as items, allocated to different search zones of the dictionary articles where they fit into specific comments.

The data selection phase forms an integral part of the dictionary conceptualisation phase of any lexicographic process, cf. Wiegand (1998). The selection of data is not determined by the structures of the dictionary. Having identified the intended target user of an envisaged dictionary, the needs and reference skills of this target user and the subsequent functions of the dictionary, the lexicographer selects data that can satisfy these needs and functions. Structures must then be put into place to accommodate the selected data. The data should not be selected on a random basis but in terms of the functions of the dictionary and the needs of the user. For each dictionary a default article structure will be devised – an article structure that accommodates an obligatory microstructure. Where the default article structure does not make provision for a specific data entry included in the data selection the lexicographer has various

options to include such an entry in the dictionary. If this data entry is specifically aimed at a given lemma sign the lexicographer can deviate from the idea of a homogeneous article structure and opt for an article with an extended obligatory microstructure in the case of the article that has the specific lemma as guiding element. However, for various reasons the data selected by a lexicographer for inclusion in the dictionary may not fit into a specific article or set of articles. This is where the data distribution structure has to make provision for the allocation of those data entries to other venues within the dictionary as a text compound. Outer texts, either in the front or back matter sections of the dictionary, are the typical venue for such data entries.

The notion of a transtextual approach to lexicographic functions also enhances the lexicographer's use of outer texts. If a dictionary e.g. has a cognitive function the lexicographer may employ outer texts to extend the cognitive guidance given to the target users of that dictionary. In a polyfunctional general language dictionary with both communicative and cognitive functions the central list would typically not focus on a comprehensive selection of place names as lemmata. For text production purposes the lexicographer may regard it as important that users should know how to spell place names. Consequently an outer text with an alphabetically ordered list of place names may be included. Where a cognitive function prevails some place names may be ordered in a list that gives the name of a country, its capital and e.g. the languages spoken in the country. These are data types that can hardly find a place in the default articles of the central list but do enhance the lexicographic experience of the intended target user.

3.2 In online dictionaries

The data distribution structure also forms an integral part of online dictionaries. Due to fewer space restrictions there is a more wide-spread occurrence of articles that display an extended obligatory microstructure. However, all data regarded by a lexicographer as significant for the intended target user can often not be accommodated in default or even extended dictionary articles. This demands an alternative venue. Yet again the lexicographer does not have to restrict the dictionary to a source that only displays its data in a single word list. The notion of a text compound or a big text, albeit in a different form, is still relevant, although all the data to be accommodated outside the word list will not necessarily be of a textual nature or be presented within an immediate constituent of the dictionary as a compound. The brief tradition reflected in current online dictionaries already shows a totally different approach to outer features. These lexicographic features do not only, or even primarily, display only data regarded by the lexicographer as necessary for the user and to achieve the genuine purpose of the dictionary. A much wider selection of data that goes beyond the genuine purpose, genuine function and even the domain of traditional lexicographic data gives evidence of a wholly new approach.

In response to both the communicative and cognitive functions of a dictionary the lexicographer may opt for data distribution procedures that target a variety of venues. Where users of printed dictionaries need to become aware of the fact that the concept of a dictionary does not only refer to the word list but rather to the compound of texts, the users of online dictionaries need to become aware of the fact that an online dictionary does not necessarily present all data in a single venue but that there may be a compound of venues to accommodate the data that the lexicographers want to present to the target users. In the planning phase of the lexicographic process attention should be given to the nature of these complementing venues.

3.3 More than textual structures

In the development of lexicographic theory directed primarily at printed dictionaries the textual components of dictionaries played an important role. The notions of “text” and “textual” may be problematic when referring to online dictionaries. In her thorough discussion Müller-Spitzer (2013:368) debates whether online dictionaries can have textual structures. She shows that there are fundamental differences between the textual structures in printed dictionaries and their counterparts in online dictionaries. Where a printed dictionary usually consists of a series of article stretches complemented by certain outer texts, an online dictionary is neither a tangible unit nor restricted to a single data medium. However, she also argues in favour of maintaining established terminological traditions and therefore she continues to use the term *textual structures*, albeit with a different interpretation of the concept. Müller-Spitzer (2013:374) does suggest some changes, e.g. to refer to *macrostructural units* rather than the *macrostructure*. Her arguments will not be repeated here but in the spirit of some of her suggestions the use of the term *outer texts* when discussing online dictionaries could rather be substituted by the term *outer features*. This suggestion is also motivated by the fact that the elements presented in the outer domain of online dictionaries do not all belong to the broad category of texts. In the remainder of this paper the term *outer features* will be used as the preferred term when talking about online dictionaries.

3.4 Dictionary-internal versus dictionary-external outer features

When discussing the mediostructure of printed dictionaries different types of cross-reference addresses are distinguished, cf. Wiegand (1996) and Gouws and Prinsloo (1998). Three important addresses in this regard are the article-internal address, the article-external address – an address within the same dictionary but beyond the borders of the article that accommodates the cross-reference position – and, thirdly, a dictionary-external address. Within printed dictionaries knowledgeable dictionary

users have become familiar with procedures where they are referred to other texts in the same dictionary but also to texts outside the dictionary. However, the text compound constituted by a printed dictionary only includes the central list as well as all the outer texts presented in that dictionary. Reference to dictionary-external sources does not elevate those external sources to outer texts of the given dictionary.

The notion of a text compound could, albeit with a slightly different interpretation, also be applied to online dictionaries in the sense that the outer features complement the word list and all these components together constitute the dictionary at large, i.e. a *feature compound*. This compound would, to a certain extent, be comparable to what is found in printed dictionaries. But the scope of the feature compound of an online dictionary exceeds that of the text compound of a printed dictionary. The unique nature of data that can be included in the articles of online dictionaries, e.g. video and audio clips, can also be found in thematically ordered outer venues within the same dictionary, constituting a more traditional compound. However, the outer features can also be dictionary-external and links within the dictionary, e.g. in the articles, can guide users to these sources. This constitutes a feature compound with the word list and dictionary-internal outer features as core components whilst some dictionary-external sources function as satellite outer features that are part of the comprehensive feature compound.

4 Types of outer features in e-dictionaries

Although it is probably true that “Dictionary users are known to allocate little time to the study of these preparatory matters.” (Busane 1990: 28), e-dictionaries have come up with a large variety of features complementing the word list. In this section, we will examine the outer features offered in online dictionaries of German and English from well-known dictionary publishers¹: Duden online², Pons Online-Wörterbuch³, Cambridge Dictionaries Online⁴, Collins Dictionary⁵, Longman Dictionary of Contem-

1 We thank student worker Martin Loder at IDS Mannheim for helping to collect the data presented in section 4.

2 <http://www.duden.de>. There is no information on the site about the print dictionary/ies on which the web page is possibly based.

3 <http://de.pons.com/>. There is no information on the site about the print dictionary/ies on which the web page is possibly based.

4 <http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>. The only information on the site about the print dictionary/ies on which the web page is possibly based reads as follows: “Our online dictionaries are simply versions of our paper dictionaries.” (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/help/>).

5 <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/>. There is no information on the site about the print dictionary/ies on which the web page is possibly based.

porary English Online⁶, Macmillan Dictionary⁷, Merriam-Webster⁸, and Oxford Dictionaries⁹. We will give an overview of features found in all dictionaries and some of those unique to single dictionaries, starting with user guidelines as the supposedly most important outer feature for all dictionaries. In section 4.2 we will list and categorize other outer features found in the dictionaries examined here.

4.1 User guidelines

4.1.1 Duden online

When opening “Duden online”, users can read a short introductory text describing the dictionary content¹⁰:

“Duden online bietet Ihnen umfassende Informationen zur Rechtschreibung, Grammatik und Bedeutung eines Wortes. Es zeigt den richtigen Gebrauch sowie Aussprache und Herkunft eines Wortes und verzeichnet dessen Synonyme.” (<http://www.duden.de/woerterbuch>) [Duden online offers you comprehensive information on orthography, grammar, and meaning of a word. It demonstrates the correct use as well as pronunciation and etymology of a word and gives its synonyms.]

A link (“Mehr über Duden online” [more on Duden online]) leads away from the home page to the help page, which consists of an introductory text and a menu. The introductory text gives more detailed information on the dictionary content and on how the team of editors works on improving the dictionary (adding new words, evaluating

⁶ <http://www.ldoceonline.com/>. The only information on the site about the print dictionary/ies on which the web page is possibly based reads as follows: “**The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online** is an online version of the CD-ROM of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, Updated Edition.” (<http://www.ldoceonline.com/>).

⁷ <http://www.macmillandictionary.com>. Included in the menu item “More” is a text letting readers/users know that the online dictionary is based on “Macmillan English Dictionary” (1st edition 2002) in its “latest edition”.

⁸ <http://www.merriam-webster.com>. the information on which dictionary the online dictionary is based is to be found under the site’s FAQ, (Question “Which dictionary is used on Merriam-Webster Online?”: “The Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary is based on the print version of *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate® Dictionary, Eleventh Edition*.” (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/info/faq.htm>).

⁹ <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com>. In the site’s “Help” menu, the information about the source for the online dictionary is to be found under the question “What is available on the Oxford Dictionaries site?”: “Comprehensive current English dictionaries and thesauruses. More than 350,000 English words, definitions, and entries and over 600,000 synonyms and antonyms in our enhanced and updated online versions of the latest editions of *Oxford Dictionary of English*, *New Oxford American Dictionary*, *Oxford Thesaurus of English*, *Oxford American Writer’s Thesaurus*.” (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/words/content-help>).

¹⁰ This is the only text in “Duden online” user guidelines addressing readers/users directly.

user feedback). The help menu comprises 13 items (see Figure 1), which correspond with the main captions given in articles. The help page cannot only be opened coming from the home page but also from every article through a link “Hilfe zum Wörterbuch” [help with the dictionary], which is part of a standard link menu shown above the article giving the entries “Drucken” [print] – “Zitieren” [citation] – “Hilfe zum Wörterbuch” [help with the dictionary] – “Weitersagen” [share].

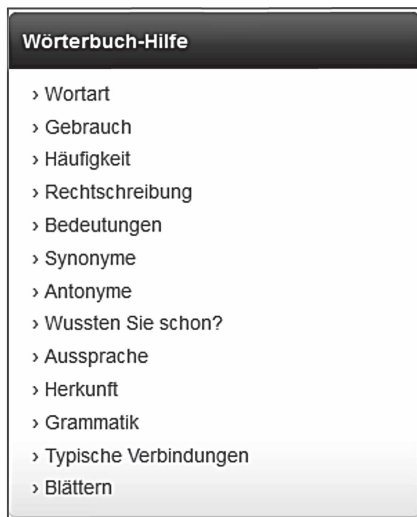


Figure 1: Help menu in “Duden online”

Each link of the help menu leads to a new page with a short text explaining what kind of information is to be found under the heading. The help texts give numerous examples of certain phenomena, e.g. stylistic information, but none of these examples are linked to the corresponding article in the dictionary. Linking between the help menu and the articles exists only the other way around, as all help texts can be accessed via clicking on an i-button besides the caption in each article (see Figure 2). Some links in the help texts lead users to other parts of the Duden web page, e.g. a link (from the help text on orthographic information in the dictionary articles) to a text with the official orthographic rules of German¹¹ as part of the menu “Sprachwissen” [language knowledge].

¹¹ Regrettably, the very many words given as examples in the orthographic rules are not hyperlinked to the corresponding articles in “Duden online”.



Figure 2: Caption and i-button in “Duden online” (article NACHFRAGE¹², information on pronunciation)

All texts in “Duden online” user guidelines give explanations on the dictionary content except one text on browsing the dictionary (“Blättern”). Under this heading (at the bottom of each article), five words in the word list before and after the article are given as hyperlinks. There are no user guidelines on how to search in the dictionary, and although the Duden web page itself is rather complex (comprising a shop for Duden products, language related information, and a tool for automatic text correction besides the dictionary¹³), there is no general help menu for the site explaining, for example, that to type a word into the search field triggers a search not only in “Duden online”, but in all parts of the Duden page, i.e. in dictionary-external outer features functioning as satellites of the text compound.

4.1.2 PONS Online-Wörterbuch

“PONS Online-Wörterbuch” is, in fact, not only one dictionary, but a site offering access to a number of bilingual general and pictorial dictionaries (with German as one language), a dictionary of German orthography, and a German learners’ dictionary. The home page of the dictionary offers two menu bars: one on the top and one at the bottom of the page, both including an entry to guide users to the user guidelines.

In the lower menu bar¹⁴, the “Hilfe” [help] link opens up a page giving information on “Suche im Wörterbuch” [Search in the dictionary], on specific types of information (e.g., information given in the user-generated “OpenDictionary”), on how to add entries to a personalized vocabulary trainer, on how to participate in the PONS

¹² Article NACHFRAGE. Duden Online 2015. <http://www.duden.de/suchen/dudenonline/Nachfrage> (5 February 2015).

¹³ Besides the help menu for the dictionary, there are further help menus: technical support for Duden products (e.g., dictionary apps) and support for ordering Duden products in the online shop.

¹⁴ Items in the lower menu bar are: “Impressum” [Imprint] – “Hilfe” [Help] – “AGB” [General conditions] – “Datenschutzerklärung” [Privacy] – “Nutzungsbedingungen” [Terms of use] – “Werbung” [Advertisements] – “Über unsere Werbung” [On our advertisements] – “Handel” [Traders]. All the information given under “Hilfe”, is information on the online dictionary, although the web site contains two more main menu items: “Produkte & Shop” and “Verlag” [publishing house]. There are no help texts on these, and no support (technical or for the shop) is offered.

community and to contribute to “OpenDictionary”, and on how to earn “CreditPONS” (points users can earn for contributing to the dictionary). The text under the heading “Suche im Wörterbuch” offers information on search strings, bold words, light grey words and words in italics, and abbreviations, and explains how to hide/activate examples in all articles, how to change the target language, how to use the feedback form, and how to give feedback, comments, and suggestions.¹⁵ Words given as examples in these texts are not hyperlinked to the corresponding articles in the dictionary. Since the help texts do not give information on the microstructure of the articles (like the “Duden online” user guidelines do, see above), but explain how to use the dictionary, there is also no cross-referencing from dictionary articles to the help texts.

In “PONS Online-Wörterbuch”, an i-button is shown within each article, but this does not lead to a help text (as in “Duden online”, see above), but opens a window with links to a list of synonyms for the word presented by the lemma sign as given in the user-generated “OpenDictionary”, a link for sending feedback, and a link to further information on the lemma (see Figure 3). Following the link to further information does not give more information on the dictionary, but opens a list of links to other web sites with encyclopaedic information, corpus citations, grammatical information, etc. for the lemma. Yet again, these sources function as dictionary-external outer features.

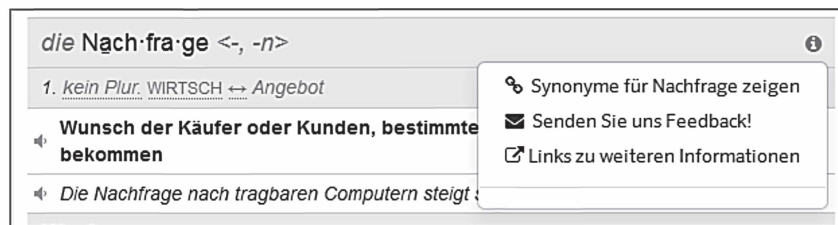


Figure 3: Window with links, which opens when clicking on i-button, in “PONS Online-Wörterbuch” (article NACHFRAGE¹⁶)

A second way to access user guidelines in “PONS Online-Wörterbuch” is the menu “Tipps & Tools” in the upper menu bar shown in Figure 4. Information given here under the heading “Tipps zum Nachschlagen” [Search tips]¹⁷ explains in detail (using

¹⁵ A hyperlink “Ausführliche Hinweise zum Online-Nachschlagen bei PONS” [Comprehensive information on searching online in PONS] given under this section was broken when tested on 5 February 2015.

¹⁶ Article NACHFRAGE. PONS Online-Wörterbuch 2015. <http://de.pons.com/%C3%BCbersetzung?q=Nachfrage&I=dedx&in=&lf=> (5 February 2015).

¹⁷ Further links under “Tipps & Tools” lead to pages with a list of French irregular verbs, with information on PONS apps and on the PONS API for developers, and on how to download PONS plugins for browsers and for own websites.

many screen shots) how to access the dictionary, search for an entry, view the list of lemmata, search for a multi word unit, display the article overview, interpret data on words and multi word units correctly, and how to use useful links.



Figure 4: Upper menu bar in “PONS Online-Wörterbuch” comprising “Tipps & Tools”

In addition, technical tips (e.g. how to copy from the dictionary into word processing software) are offered. On the first page after clicking on “Tipps zum Nachschlagen” [Search tips], the editors write:

PONS ist sehr leicht zu bedienen. Nachfolgend geben wir Ihnen ein paar Nachschlagetipps aus der Redaktionspraxis, damit Sie mit noch mehr Spaß und noch größerer Zufriedenheit nachschlagen. (<http://de.pons.com/schule-info/tipps-zum-online-nachschlagen-bei-pons/>). [PONS is very easy to use. In the following, we give some reference tips on searching based on our editorial practice, so that you will have even more fun and will experience more satisfaction when consulting.]

As seen from this example, the texts directly address readers/users. They aim at making looking-up in PONS Online-Wörterbuch more fun and more satisfactory. In some of these texts there are hyperlinks to other offers on the web site, e.g. exercises for students.¹⁸

4.1.3 Cambridge Dictionaries Online

“Cambridge Dictionaries Online” is a site on which several bilingual dictionaries (with English as one language), an English learners’ dictionary, and dictionaries of British and American English are offered. All dictionaries can be searched at the same time, or users choose one or more which s/he wants to consult. On the home page, the publishers announce:

We have corpus-informed dictionaries for English language learners at all levels. They’re ideal for anyone preparing for Cambridge English exams and IELTS. (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>)

There is only one menu on the bottom of the site, comprising the items “Learn” – “Share” – “Develop” – “About”. A “Help” menu can be found under the heading

¹⁸ Unfortunately, when tested on 5 February 2015, some of the links to other parts of the web site (for example, those leading to exercises) were broken.

“Learn”. It offers answers to the most frequently asked questions regarding the dictionary (see Figure 5) and asks readers/users to contact the editors if they have a question which isn’t in this list, or if the answer given does not satisfy them.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why isn't this word in your dictionary? • What does this word mean? • What is the origin of this word? • Do you have an online thesaurus? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can I find out a word's pronunciation? • What do the phonetic symbols mean? • What do the codes in the dictionary entries mean? • What do <i>sb</i> and <i>sth</i> in entries mean? • What do the A1, B2, C1, etc. labels mean? |
|--|---|

Figure 5: List of most frequently asked questions in help menu in “Cambridge Dictionaries Online”

In some of these rather short texts (addressing readers/users directly), there are hyperlinks to further information on the same site (lists of phonetic symbols, lists of grammar codes), and hyperlinks to external sites (text on Cambridge corpus, information on “English Profile” and “Adobe Flash Player”). While some information on the dictionary content is given in the “Help” texts, there is no information on how to search the dictionary. Interestingly enough, the very scarce user guidelines given here are presented as a reaction to user questions and not as a something offered by the editors to facilitate using the dictionary.

There are no hyperlinks from dictionary articles in “Cambridge Dictionaries Online” to the help menu texts, because no *i*-button or a comparable symbol is used in the online presentation of dictionary articles. Help texts are not linked to dictionary articles, either, which is due to the fact that hardly any examples are given in the information on how to use the dictionary. Only the text “Labels & Codes”, which can be accessed following a hyperlink from the question “What do the codes in the dictionary mean?”, gives examples, which appear partly in italics, partly in light blue. These look like hyperlinks, but do not function like them.

4.1.4 Collins Dictionaries

There are no user guidelines to be found on the web page of “Collins Dictionaries”. A lower menu bar contains the items “Tools & Widgets” – “API” – “Advertising” – “Terms & Conditions” – “Contact us”, the upper menu bar enables users to choose between “Dictionaries” – “Thesaurus” – “Translator” – “Words & Languages” – “Word Games” – “New”.

4.1.5 Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online (LDOCE Online)

The home page of LDOCE Online describes the content of the site as shown in Figure 6. In a menu bar at the top of the page¹⁹ the entry “How to use” links to the user guidelines. A second menu bar at the bottom of the page does not link to help texts.²⁰

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online offers:

Dictionary Search
Fully searchable contents of the A-Z text of the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English

English Pronunciation
Selected **headwords** pronounced in British and American English (Buy the full CD-ROM version for pronunciation of ALL headwords, including names of people and places)

Example Sentences
Selected **example sentences** pronounced, to help you improve your intonation (Buy the full CD-ROM version to hear 88,000 example sentences pronounced)

Figure 6: Information on dictionary content of LDOCE Online

The user guidelines explain how to look up articles using the search field on the dictionary homepage (or coming directly from a word processor or e-mail program), how to navigate in articles (using a “menu” button, following cross-references) and how to listen to sound files²¹. They are partly given under the heading “How to use the [...] dictionary” or as answers to frequently asked questions (under the heading “Support”) and address readers/users directly.

Besides explaining how to use the search box, the user guidelines also link to two pages from which the dictionary content can either be accessed alphabetically (by choosing a letter, e.g. *U*, and clicking on an partial article stretch, e.g. *untidy ... unwritten*), or by choosing “dictionary topics” (e.g., Archaeology, Banking, Christianity, Design, Economics). Unfortunately, there is no further information on the onomasiological search option, for example on when to use it profitably. Dictionary users

¹⁹ The upper menu bar comprises the entries “Widgets” – “How to use” – “About LDOCE”.

²⁰ The lower menu bar comprises the entries “Pearson ELT” – “Longman Dictionaries” – “Copyright and legal” – “Privacy Policy” – “Cookie Policy”.

²¹ The user guidelines also contain a pronunciation chart to help to decode IPA symbols in articles.

will find a link to the “Topic Dictionary” in LDOCE Online, though, when searching for a word (see Figure 7).

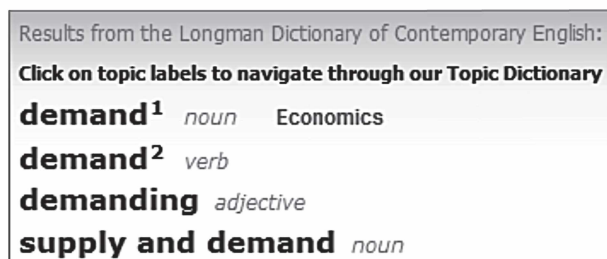


Figure 7: Result for search “demand” in LDOCE Online with link to topic “Economics” in “Topic Dictionary”

As in “Cambridge Dictionaries Online” (see above), there are no hyperlinks from dictionary articles in LDOCE Online to the help menu texts, and the help texts are not linked to dictionary articles, either.

4.1.6 Macmillan Dictionary

“Macmillan Dictionary” does not offer a help menu. A lower menu bar contains the entries “Index” – “Privacy” – “Cookie Policy” – “Terms and Conditions”, the upper menu bar enables users to choose between “Blog” – “BuzzWord” – “Open Dictionary” – “Games” – “Resources” – “API” – “More”. Under this last entry (see Figure 8), a text “About Macmillan Dictionaries” can be found:

The award-winning Macmillan English Dictionary was first published in 2002. Crafted by teams of lexicographers in Britain and the United States, it has as its source a corpus, a database containing millions of examples of English as used around the world. [...] The dictionary has been regularly updated, and the latest edition, presented free online for the first time, includes a thesaurus, fully integrated into the entries. (<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/about.html>)

A very short text (“Options”) informs readers/users on two default settings to be chosen from: “Select American English or British English” and “Show more or less detail”. Some content related information is given in the texts “Red Words and Stars” (i. e., ways of distinguishing between high-frequency core vocabulary and less common words), “Clear Definitions” (explaining defining techniques and listing the defining vocabulary), and “Real Examples” (commenting on the use of corpus examples to illustrate meaning). The FAQ contain no questions on the content and only three questions concern the use of the dictionary: “How do I switch the default from British to American English?”, “Can I set the default view to ‘Show Less?’”, and “How do I use the Thesaurus?”. Most of the FAQ are general questions like “Will learners lose anything by not having the dictionary in book form?” or “Are there any community site gadgets?”.

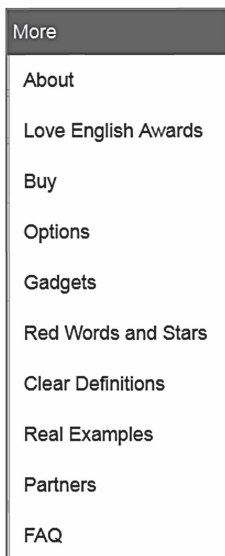


Figure 8: Menu “More” in “Macmillan Dictionary”

4.1.7 Merriam-Webster

The “Merriam-Webster” home page offers only one lower menu bar, in which the entry “Help” is included.²² The “Help” menu contains three sections: “Using Merriam-Webster Online”, “Merriam-Webster Reference Help”, and “Merriam-Webster Mobile App Help”. The first section does not explain how to search in the dictionary, but describes (without addressing the reader/user directly) how to cite the dictionary correctly and gives answers to frequently asked questions about words and dictionaries, e.g. “I have coined a word. How do I get credit for it?” or “Why are some words missing from the dictionary?”. Figure 9 gives an overview of the texts included under the headline “Merriam-Webster Reference Help”.

In this context, the “Explanatory Notes to the Dictionary” are relevant. They give information on attributive nouns, capitalization, combining forms, prefixes, and suffixes, cross-references, definitions, entries, etymology, functional labels, inflected forms, names of plants and animals, synonyms, undefined words, and usage. A closer look at these texts reveals that they are taken directly from the print version of the dictionary without adaptations to the new medium. For example, the explanation of “Main Entries” reads as follows:

²² The menu bar contains the following entries: “Home” – “Help” – “About us” – “Shop” – “Advertising Info” – “Dictionary API” – “Privacy Policy” – “About our Ads” – “Contact us” – “Browser Tools”.

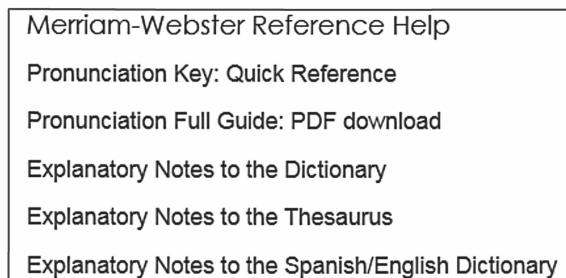


Figure 9: Help menu texts in “Merriam-Webster”

A boldface letter or a combination of such letters, including punctuation marks and diacritics where needed, that is set flush with the left-hand margin of each column of type is a main entry or entry word. (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/help/dictionary-explanatory-notes/entries.htm>)

Neither are there “columns of type” in the online version, nor are punctuation marks and diacritics included in the lemma sign (in the online dictionary they are given separately, see Figure 10).

None of the many examples contained in the “Help” texts are linked to the corresponding dictionary articles, and no hyperlinks lead from the articles to the user guidelines as shown in Figure 10: the information “often attributive” could be hyperlinked to the text “Attributive Nouns” in the “Help” menu.



Figure 10: Extract from article BUSINESS²³ in “Merriam-Webster”

4.1.8 Oxford Dictionaries

User guidelines for “Oxford Dictionaries” are accessible via a menu found either on the very top (menu bar items: “About”²⁴ – “Help” – “Subscribe” – “Log in”) or the very bottom (menu items: “Contact us” – “Privacy Policy & legal notice” – “Browse

²³ Article BUSINESS. Merriam-Webster.com 2015. <http://www.merriam-webster.com> (5 February 2015).

²⁴ In the “About” texts the background of the site and its intentions are explained, and a link to “Customer service and support” opens up a page with technical information (e.g., setting up an account, logging in).

dictionary” – “Help” – “About”) of the page. The “Help” menu (mostly addressing readers/users directly) contains varied information under the following headlines:

- “Subscription help” with “Common questions about subscriptions”,
- “Account and access help” with “Common questions about access”,
- “Using the site” with “Common questions about the site”,
- “Dictionaries [sic!] products and language help”.

The help menu has its own navigational structure (see Figure 11) always shown on the right side of the screen, while in the central area of the screen the help texts themselves are presented. The section “Using the site” combines help texts on searching in the dictionary (and other technical aspects) with information on the dictionary content.

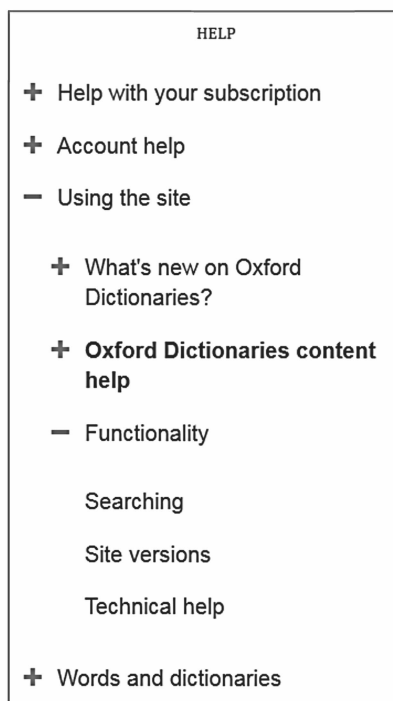


Figure 11: Help menu navigational structure in “Oxford Dictionaries”

Help with searching in “Oxford Dictionaries” is given on the following topics: special characters, wildcard searching, advanced search (not available any more), and federated searching. A short “Guide to dictionary entries” within the “Oxford Dictionaries content help” comments on homonyms, headwords, line breaks/syllabification, pronunciation, senses, example sentences, derivatives, and origin. Some terminological words used in these explanations (e.g., *derivatives*, *etymology*) are linked to the corresponding dictionary articles, and some examples given (e.g., *bank* under “homo-

nyms”) are linked to the corresponding articles as well. However, hyperlinks do not systematically lead users from articles to the user guidelines (see Figure 12).

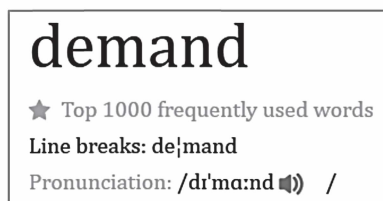


Figure 12: Extract from article DEMAND²⁵ in “Oxford Dictionaries” with hyperlinks to help text “pronunciation”, but not to help text “line breaks/syllabification”

4.1.9 Summary

Two of the dictionaries presented here (“Collins Dictionaries” and “Macmillan Dictionary”) do not have user guidelines at all, although these are thought to be compulsory in lexicographic research (e.g., Hausmann & Wiegand 1989). All other dictionaries give at least some kind of information on dictionary content and/or search functions (see Table 1). Only “Oxford Dictionaries” links from (some) examples given or terminology used in user guidelines to the corresponding articles, and only “Duden online” offers users a systematic way of looking up information in the user guidelines directly from articles.

Table 1: User guidelines in online dictionaries in comparison

Dictionary	Information on microstructure	Tips on search and navigation	Hyperlinks from user guidelines to entries	Hyperlinks from entries to user guidelines
Duden online	extensive	–	–	systematically
PONS Online-Wörterbuch	limited	extensive	–	–
Cambridge Dictionaries Online	limited	–	–	–
LDOCE Online	-	limited	–	-
Merriam-Webster	extensive (but for print version)	–	–	–
Oxford Dictionaries	extensive	extensive	some	some

²⁵ Article DEMAND. Oxford Dictionaries 2015. <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/demand> (5 February 2015).

All dictionaries come up with different ways of making user guidelines accessible and show some variation in terminology and placement of menus:

- “Duden Online”: link to menu “Mehr über Duden online” (<http://www.duden.de/hilfe>) from home page; no entry in menu bars; user guidelines also accessible via i-button in articles;
- “PONS Online-Wörterbuch”: menu “Hilfe” (<http://de.pons.com/specials/cms/hilfe>) in lower menu bar and menu “Tipps & Tools” (<http://de.pons.com/schule-info/tipps-zum-online-nachschlagen-bei-pons/>) in upper menu bar with different content;
- “Cambridge Dictionaries Online”: menu “Help” (<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/help/>) under caption “Learn” in lower menu bar;
- “LDOCE Online”: menu “How to use” (<http://www.ldoceonline.com/howtouse.html>) in upper menu bar;
- “Merriam-Webster”: menu “Help” (<http://www.merriam-webster.com/help/index.html>) in lower menu bar;
- Oxford Dictionaries: menu “Help” (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/words/help>) in upper and lower menu bar with identical content.

None of the dictionaries examined here use the term “User guidelines”, but instead there seems to be a tendency to use “Help”. This indicates a new way of inviting the users to consult the relevant text – but only when needed. But it also indicates that the lexicographers do not regard the use of user guidelines as obligatory. The term “Support” seems to be reserved for help with technical problems and (in some cases) for help with buying/subscribing to dictionary content.

4.1.10 Discussion

At a first glance, the online dictionaries examined here seem to treat user guidelines rather carelessly, either by omitting them completely, or by not giving detailed information on searching and navigating the dictionary and/or the information given in articles. None of the dictionaries’ user guidelines in this study mention any of the other outer features they offer (see 4.2). And hardly any of the help texts are linked with dictionary articles and vice versa. But does this really mean that these dictionaries do not achieve their genuine purpose?

When examining demands on online dictionaries by users in an online study carried out at the Institute for the German Language (Mannheim) in 2010²⁶, one of the criteria making a good online dictionary was clarity:

More than half of the respondents (53.8%) considered the aspect “The search windows are located in a prominent position, so it is easy to spot” to be most important for the clarity of an online dictionary. 25.9% of the participants chose ‘A quick overview of the most important features and functions of the online dictionary is possible’. Further suggested options included:

²⁶ For background information on these studies see Koplenig & Müller-Spitzer (2014).

‘You can quickly obtain an overview of the keywords contained in the online dictionary’ (16.2%) and ‘There is an introduction to the online dictionary that is clearly arranged and easy to absorb’ (4.4%). (Müller-Spitzer & Koplenig 2014, S. 165)

An introductory text to the dictionary seems to be unnecessary in the mind of a great majority of participants in this study. More important are a prominently positioned search field (which all dictionaries examined here have) and a clear design of the dictionary, where different functionalities become clear at first glance.

In LDOCE Online the menu “How to use” starts with a very short, but nonetheless comprehensive explanation of how to look up words in this dictionary (see Figure 13). If no further search options are offered, user guidelines on searching in the dictionary need not be given, since dictionary users will intuitively know how to use the search field.

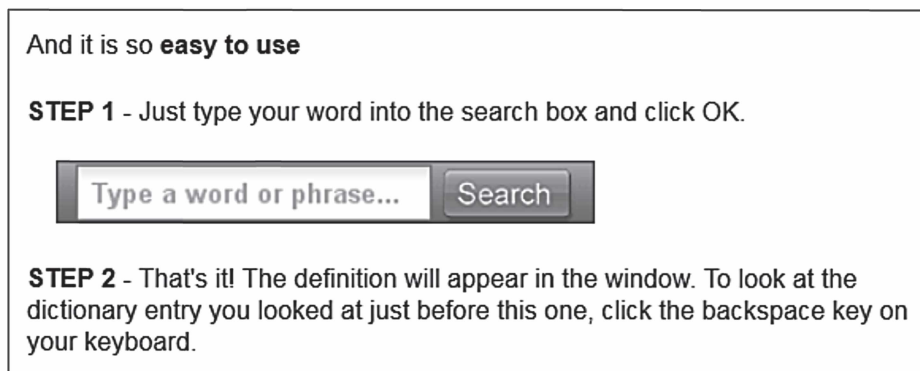


Figure 13: Excerpt from text “How to use” in LDOCE Online (<http://www.ldoceonline.com/howtouse.html>)

The same seems to be true for information on ways of navigating in articles. In most cases, users will know how to scroll through longer articles and they will be able to interpret hyperlinks (designed as such, e.g. by light blue color or by underlining) to follow cross-references. Special features, e.g. the possibility to see an overview of all senses of a highly polysemous word, will probably need some explanation, though. LDOCE Online, for example, offers a “Menu” button in longer articles. The explanation of when and how to use this button is concise, but sufficient:

What does the ‘menu’ button do? When a word has many definitions, the ‘menu’ button will help you find the meaning you’re looking for fast! Click on the ‘menu’ button and a small window will open to show shortcuts to the many meanings of your word. Choosing one of the shortcuts will position that part of the entry at the top of the screen. Use the X icon to close this window. <http://www.ldoceonline.com/howtouse.html>

Although a discussion of dictionary content might still be advisable in a user guidelines text the role of these texts, especially on how to use an online dictionary with regard to e.g. navigation, search options, etc. seems to have become obsolete. In addition, hardly any of the dictionaries considered here give information on their decisions on which words to include in the dictionary (i.e. within the macrostructure) or name the corpus on which the data are based, and only some explain, which kind of data are given in articles (i.e. within the microstructure). Besides, terminology used in the dictionary is not necessarily explained (Oxford Dictionaries being an exception). This emphasises the innovative approach, also to dictionary structures, that prevail in online dictionaries. Metalexicographic models need to be developed that can guide practical lexicographers to take initiative in the way in which outer features are employed. The new opportunities are multifold and need to be utilised by practical lexicographers. However, innovation should not only be a responsibility within the lexicographic practice. Theoretical lexicographers need to take the responsibility for the proposal and formulation of theoretical approaches that can guide their colleagues in the practice to benefit from the vast array of opportunities. The discussion of dictionary structures in the general theory of lexicography needs to be adapted to make provision for the changing situation that prevails in online dictionaries.

4.2 Other Outer Features

In this section we give information on other outer features found in the dictionaries examined here (for an overall view see Table 2). It is interesting to see how often the features do not correspond to those that are found in printed dictionaries. The outer features found in the examined dictionaries are mainly:

- pointers to dictionary content,
- general information,
- language games and teaching material,
- links to other sources.

“Pointers to dictionary content” are features, which are used to attract the users’ attention to the dictionary content by either presenting a single article (chosen randomly) or by listing several (hyperlinked) articles. To compile these lists, different criteria are applied: frequency of look-ups, date of publication, new words, interesting orthography, etymology, or other facts. “General information” is a category in which texts and videos are used to present interesting facts to users about the specific dictionary or lexicography in general, and on language. Again, orthographic and etymological data, but also grammatical facts are quite common in this category. In “Language games and teaching material”, a large variety of (interactive or printable) games on vocabulary knowledge is used as a means of edutainment, involving material from the dictionaries. With “Links to other sources”, users have the chance to find

more information on their search word in other dictionaries, but also in further online sources (e.g. encyclopaedic information). Other sources can also be language tools.

Where the outer texts in printed dictionaries are part of the book structure of a dictionary it has been indicated in an earlier section of this paper that the outer features in online dictionaries can also be dictionary-external. The scope of a feature compound can go beyond the single source. Although the dictionaries examined in this paper have only embarked in a limited way on using dictionary-external features this aspect needs to be discussed in detail and theoretically-based proposals still need to be made, including suggestions for the classification of different types of dictionary-external features. This paper will not endeavour to categorize dictionary-external outer features not found in the examined dictionaries.

The distinction between dictionary-internal and dictionary-external features is a broad categorization within which more specific categorizations are required. A theoretical model has to give guidance with regard to these different categorization possibilities. The variety and diversity of dictionary-internal features prevailing in the examined dictionaries give evidence of approaches not seen in a similar way in printed dictionaries. In order to be able to conduct a thorough analysis of these types of outer features and to be able to formulate guidelines for future online dictionaries it is important to have a clear categorization of these features.

Ways of categorizing these outer features could be to group them according to their medium (text [including links] – video) or their interactivity (static [presentation of single article, texts, videos] – interactive [list of hyperlinked articles, games, links]). Groups could also be defined by a) information on the dictionary (presentation of single articles, lists of articles, texts and videos on the dictionary), b) language information outside the dictionary (texts and videos on language, language games, links to other dictionaries, language tools), and c) other information (links to encyclopedic information, pictures). Table 2 also gives a categorization of the features found in the examined dictionaries.

Table 2: Overall view on outer features (other than user guidelines)

Category	Subcategory	Criteria/content	Examples
pointers to dictionary content	single articles		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Featured Entry” (LDOCE Online) – “Word of the Day” (Cambridge Dictionary and others) – “Buzz Word” (Macmillan Dictionary)
	lists of articles	frequency of look-ups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Most popular – our most frequent searched words” (Merriam-Webster) – “50 Most Often Viewed Words on CollinsDictionary.com” (Collins Dictionaries)
		date of publication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Latest Published Words and Updates” (Collins Dictionaries)

Category	Subcategory	Criteria/content	Examples
pointers to dictionary content	lists of articles	new words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “New Words & Slang” (Merriam-Webster) – “Latest New Word Submissions” (Collins Dictionaries)
		orthography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Words which are hard to spell” (Duden online) – “Some common misspellings in English” (Macmillan Dictionary)
		etymology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Words from Hindi/Latin/French etc.” (Collins Dictionaries)
		interesting language facts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Weird and wonderful words” (Oxford Dictionaries) – “Commonly Confused Words” (Collins Dictionaries) – “Words containing <i>q</i> not followed by <i>u</i>” (Oxford Dictionaries)
general information	information on dictionary or lexicography		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Wie kommt ein Wort ins Wörterbuch?” [How does a word find its way into the dictionary?] (video; Duden online) – “The Longest Word in the Collins English Dictionary” (Collins Dictionaries) – “How do you know what a word means?” (Oxford Dictionaries) – “Pictures in the Dictionary: The story of those iconic illustrations” (video; Merriam-Webster)
	information on language	grammar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Französische Verbtabelle” [French irregular verbs] (PONS Online-Wörterbuch) – “Real Grammar: Is <i>impact</i> a noun or a verb?” (video; Macmillan Dictionary) – “Weird Plurals: One goose, two geese. One moose, two ... moose. What’s up with that?” (video; Merriam-Webster)
		orthography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “How to use commas” (Oxford Dictionaries) – “Spelling Rules” (Collins Dictionaries)
		etymology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Was the first computer ‘bug’ a real insect?” (Oxford Dictionaries) – “What is the origin of the word ‘OK’?” (Oxford Dictionaries)
		miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Quote of the week” (Oxford Dictionaries) – “Top 10 Scrabble Tip” (Collins Dictionaries)

Category	Subcategory	Criteria/content	Examples
language games and teaching material	vocabulary	finding words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Dictionary pictures of the day (Do you know what each of these is called?)” (LDOCE Online) – “Language Puzzles”, e.g., “Halloween Wordsearch” (Macmillan Dictionary)
		synonymy and antonymy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Syn City” (Merriam-Webster)
		meaning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “How strong is your vocabulary?” (Merriam-Webster)
		frequency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Red Words Game” (Merriam-Webster)
	crossword puzzles and scrabble		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Jumble Crossword” (Merriam-Webster) – “Collins Scrabble Checker” (Collins Dictionaries)
	orthography		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Oxford Dictionaries Spelling Challenge” (Oxford Dictionaries) – “Commonly misspelled words” (Merriam-Webster)
	idioms and quotes		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Redensarten-Quiz” [quiz on idioms] (Duden online) – “Who said it: Gaga or Shakespeare?” (Collins Dictionaries)
	grammar		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Irregular Verb Wheel” (Macmillan Dictionary)
	teaching material and online query		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Red words e-lesson” (Macmillan Dictionary) – “What do you think?” (Collins Dictionaries)
links to other sources	other dictionaries		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Definitions of [search word] in other dictionaries” (Cambridge Dictionaries Online) – “All synonyms and antonyms for [search word]” (Merriam-Webster)
	other reference sources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Britannica: Encyclopedia article about [search word]” (Merriam-Webster) – “[Search word] photos from Flickr” (Collins Dictionaries)
	language tools		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – “Translator” (Collins Dictionaries) – “Rechtschreibprüfprogramm” [spell checker] (Duden online)

Besides the features given above, the dictionaries examined here offer further information and features on their sites, mainly links to social media and different ways of access to the dictionary (besides the simple word search). We do not count these

as outer features: social media are used to attract attention to the dictionary and to advertise their content. They are not linked to the genuine purpose of the dictionary, which is to give information on language in a specific situation of information need. In this regard it is important to maintain a distinction between the genuine purpose and the genuine function of a dictionary. Some outer features do not help to achieve the genuine purpose of the specific dictionary but they do participate in achieving the genuine function of the dictionary. In a dictionary with a cognitive function a feature presenting a list dealing with weights and measures helps to satisfy a cognitive need of the users and adheres to a genuine function of the dictionary, although it does not support the genuine purpose, i.e. guidance with regard to the language that constitutes the subject matter of the dictionary. Some of the outer features in these online dictionaries exceed the traditional functions of dictionaries. Besides outer features focusing on edutainment, that could be regarded as part of the execution of the cognitive function of these dictionaries, the emergence of outer features that add entertainment value to the dictionary may introduce a function of lexicotainment. It is significant that lexicographers opt for a variety of outer features that strengthen the marketing potential of the dictionary albeit not on account of traditional lexicographic features. These outer features add to a more comprehensive access to a bigger variety of data. This stresses the role of online dictionaries as tools of which the subject matter represents a much broader spectrum of knowledge than traditionally seen in printed dictionaries.

demand

★ Top 1000 frequently used words
 Line breaks: de|mand
 Pronunciation: /dɪ'mɑːnd/

SHARE THIS ENTRY

Definition of *demand* in English:
NOUN

1 An insistent and peremptory request, made as of right:
'a series of demands for far-reaching reforms'

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES
 SYNONYMS

1.1 (usually demands) Pressing requirements:
'he's got enough demands on his time already'

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES
 SYNONYMS

1.2 [MASS NOUN] The desire of consumers, clients, employers, etc. for a particular commodity, service, or other item:
'a recent slump in demand'
 [COUNT NOUN] *'a demand for specialists'*

MORE EXAMPLE SENTENCES
 SYNONYMS

Subscribe to remove adverts and access premium resources
[Find out more >](#)

Most popular

1. online	6. love
2. meaning	7. endeavour
3. valentine	8. twerk
4. stereotype	9. vape
5. swag	10. kiasu

🔥 = trending

Most popular in

Australia	Canada	India	Malaysia
Pakistan	Spain	United Kingdom	United States

[All](#)

MORE ON DEMAND

Nearby words

demagnetize	demand curve
demagogue	demand deposit

demand

Figure 14: Article DEMAND (n.) in Oxford Dictionaries with outer features “Most popular” and “Most popular in” and access structure “Nearby words” in right column on screen

Other ways of accessing the dictionary (e.g., “Nearby words” in Oxford Dictionaries, “Browse words by topics” in Merriam-Webster) are part of the dictionary access structure, not of the outer features, although they may be presented online in a similar way to outer features (see Figure 14).

The example from Oxford Dictionaries given here also illustrates how fuzzy the line between the category “pointers to dictionary content” and access structures actually is: all features classified as “pointers to dictionary content” can also be used as a means of accessing dictionary content (either of a single article or of a number of articles). Other outer features either link to outer texts (other dictionaries, for example) or cannot be used as a means of looking up single articles in the dictionary, because they do not contain links to dictionary articles (e.g., texts with grammatical information, language games). We consider access structures as “pointers to dictionary content”, when they have the additional component of drawing attention to dictionary content instead of being simply a means of finding articles.

5 The need for outer features?

Online dictionaries, as is the case with their printed counterparts, are practical instruments that should assist users in their attempts to retrieve information from the data on offer, albeit that they also include a range of data types and features directed at other purposes, e.g. to enhance the marketing of the dictionary. Online dictionaries are presented in a new medium and although they still fall within the scope of a united general theory of lexicography there will be a range of differences between printed and online dictionaries. The opportunity to be innovative in the planning and compilation of online dictionaries should not be impeded by attempts to present a mere repetition of the structures and presentation found in paper dictionaries. This also applies to decisions regarding the possible use of outer features. Traditional outer texts do not necessarily have to be presented in online dictionaries, neither do lexicographers of online dictionaries have to restrict themselves to the approach followed in printed dictionaries. The outer features in the examined dictionaries show that lexicographers did not adhere to the default types of outer features to duplicate the outer texts of printed dictionaries. This is not only because of a stronger educational and lexicotainment approach in the selection of outer features but also due to the possibilities offered by the new medium. A feature like “Pointers to dictionary content” is on technical grounds not an option in printed dictionaries. Lexicographic theory needs to make provision for these aspects. It is important that the planning of the contents of online dictionaries should not only focus on traditional data to be included in the articles and in the outer features. Attention should also be directed at non-conventional themes and topics that can be included in outer features to establish the position of the dictionary in an increasingly competitive market. As indicated earlier, there is a new trend to utilise outer features that are not related to the genuine purpose or

genuine functions of the dictionary. This needs to be negotiated in the dictionary conceptualisation phase of the lexicographic process.

Lexicographers of online dictionaries need to realise that their venues for data go beyond the articles of the dictionary and even beyond the dictionary proper. Although these articles can contain a much wider spectrum of items than those in printed dictionaries there will still be a default article structure and not every item deviating from those allocated to the default structure could be included in an extended microstructure. Consequently online dictionaries need a well-devised data distribution structure. When formulating this data distribution structure the lexicographers need to decide on the different venues of the data they intend to make accessible to their users. Where lexicographers of printed dictionaries have to identify the different outer texts and populate them with the necessary data the responsibility of lexicographers of online dictionaries goes one step further. Besides having to do what their counterparts in printed dictionaries do they need to be aware of the fact that the outer features of their dictionaries may also be existing sources which they do not have to populate with data. They do have to include links in their dictionary to guide the user to these dictionary-external outer features. In the planning of online dictionaries the lexicographers need to respond to the functions and genuine purpose of the envisaged dictionary when identifying existing sources that could be linked to the dictionary and help to constitute a new feature compound.

A question that remains to be answered is whether users of online dictionaries do need outer features. From the discussion in section 4 it is clear that online dictionaries give their users access to a wide range of outer features. These include features integrated into the genuine purpose of the dictionary, features integrated into the genuine functions of the dictionary as well as a range of other features that could even lead to the identification of one or more new functions. New features need to be identified and discussed from a theoretical perspective and lexicographers should embark on the possibilities that emerge in the online environment. In spite of all the new possibilities online dictionaries also include some outer features that resemble the outer texts in printed dictionaries. However, the quality and use of some of these outer features that display traditional topics can be enhanced by e.g. the use of video clips.

The outer features of the dictionaries discussed in section 4 reflected a stronger emphasis on edutainment and even lexicotainment. This can be taken much further in future dictionaries where features presenting edutainment along with relevant text books and the word list of the dictionary could be integrated into study packages for specific levels of school education. Such an approach would yet again stress the need for more dictionary external sources to be accommodated within the feature compound of a given dictionary. Innovative planning is needed to ensure that outer features are developed, identified and used in an optimal way.

The discussion in section 4.1.10 compels lexicographers to rethink the need of a user guidelines text, one of the two compulsory texts of a printed dictionary, when

planning an online dictionary. The reference skills of online dictionary users may neither be under- nor overestimated. A clear and less condensed approach and treatment in online dictionaries will lead to much more explicit presentation that displays more natural syntax in the dictionary articles as well as clearly identifiable links. A user guidelines text may still be included as outer feature but it is bound to lose its relevance

Like printed dictionaries online dictionaries should also be independent tools but by means of their outer features online dictionaries do not have to be isolated from more comprehensive reference procedures. An important assignment to lexicographers is not only to present data in their dictionaries but also to link their dictionaries to other sources. In the era of big data many sources that are relevant to the users of a given dictionary are available online. The notion of a feature compound compels lexicographers to develop interfaces and to link dictionaries to these sources.

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